

March 14, 2014

Thomas Tidwell, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service  
Attn: EMC - Administrative Reviews  
1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mailstop 1104  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Tidwell,

Please accept the following objections to the Shoshone NF plan:

We object to the Forest Service plans to allow a mountain bike trail in the Dunoir Special Management Unit. We lobbied for inclusion of the Dunoir as wilderness in the 1984 Wyoming Wilderness Bill when Congress instead created the Dunoir SMU due to political pressure from the timber lobby. That legislation specifically stated that the Dunoir would be used for "non-vehicular" recreation only. Mountain bicycles are vehicles, therefore they are illegal in the Dunoir and must be prohibited there. We can assure you that there was no interest in mountain bikes at that time, so if former Senator Al Simpson says otherwise, he has poor recall or is not telling the truth.

We outfitted wilderness horse pack trips in the Dunoir for more than 30 years and firmly believe this area should be designated wilderness. The Dunoir would enhance the wilderness character of the contiguous Washakie and Teton Wilderness areas. These are major components of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, now considered the largest intact ecosystem in the temperate zones of the earth. There is negligible sign of the Tie Hack logging from a century ago, as the skid trails and camps have been grown over. During our last few years of outfitting in the Dunoir, we experienced the new illegal mountain bike use. Unfortunately, despite complaints, the USFS made no attempt to enforce the law against this illegal vehicular traffic. These illegal renegades tore down the trails at break-neck speed and had near misses with our established horse strings. Family groups including children were almost run over by these bikers and we narrowly avoided a wreck. One mountain bike group even removed all the waterbars from the steep trail going over Bonneville Pass into Upper Dundee which made the trail smoother for them, but caused more serious erosion. Another mountain bike group ran into a grizzly bear while tearing down the Pinnacles trail and threw the bike at the bear to escape attack. These outlaws have no place in the Dunoir and should not be allowed there.

The Dunoir Special Management Unit is a major elk calving area and migration route. In addition, this is critical lynx, wolverine, grizzly bear and wolf habitat and should be managed to protect this large carnivore stronghold. The unique diversity of this area is a major attraction to the world. We outfitted a BBC film photographer into the Dunoir to witness this exclusive wildlife habitat where we watched a pack of wolves. In addition, we have participated in amphibian research projects to inventory the rich diversity of Tiger salamanders, Boreal chorus frogs, Boreal toads, spotted frogs and other reptiles in the Dunoir. The trail erosion caused by cavalier mountain bikes would seriously

impact the water quality of this important habitat in a world where amphibian populations are declining.

We understand that our comments were among the roughly 22,000 of 23,000 letters that the USFS recieved from the public which requested that the Forest Service recommend that the Dunoir SMU be recommended for wilderness. We support wilderness designation not vehicular use in the Dunoir and urge you to include that in the plan.

We object to the change of about 40,000 acres in the Horse Creek, Wiggins Fork, Bear Creek, and East Fork drainages from backcountry non-motorized to summer and winter motorized. We are concerned about the conversion of these 40,000 acres because they include elk calving grounds, secure grizzly bear habitat, critical lynx habitat, and crucial winter range for bighorn sheep.

We would prefer that you keep the Horse Creek, Wiggins Fork, Bear Creek and East Fork drainages managed as year round non-motorized back country recreation. There are already ample areas for motorized use on the National Forest and BLM lands.

We object to the plan to change 50 acres on Lean-to Creek from back-country non-motorized to timber lands designation for timber harvest. There has not been any motorized use of this area for over 60 years which is adjacent to the Washakie Wilderness and now considered secure grizzly bear habitat. In the 1980s we inventoried several old timber sales on the Wind River district and discovered poor regeneration rates due to the slow-growing forests. There is virtually no demand for timber sales on this district now. We urge you to manage the Lean-to Creek area as year round non-motorized back country recreation.

We object to the new motorized plans in the Wood River and Francs Peak areas. These areas have outstanding wilderness and wildlife characteristics by the Forest Service's own analysis and should not be opened to winter motorized use. These areas should be managed for their wilderness character adjacent to the Washakie Wilderness. We should not have snowmobiles disrupting wildlife and destroying the peaceful winter solitude we have experienced while skiing in these areas. We urge you to manage all of Wood River and Francs Peak as year round non-motorized back country recreation.

Finally, we are pleased that our letter was among the 96 percent of the comments which endorsed wildlife and wilderness resource protection in the future Shoshone NF plan. If this NEPA document means anything, we hope you acknowledge the will of the people who care enough about this area to write to you about it rather than bowing to the political pressure from former politicians.

Sincerely,

Tory & Meredith Taylor

Taylor Outfitters

Dubois, WY

Far better it is to dare mighty things  
than to take rank with those poor timid spirits  
who know neither victory nor defeat.  
Teddy Roosevelt 1899